

**Pastor Mark Mikels - September 27, 2020**

**"DEPLOYING HOPE IN THE REALITIES OF LIFE"**

**"A WORLD-WIDE FELLOWSHIP"**

(Revelation 7:9-10; Philippians 2:1-2)

**Intro ...** Today I want to put an incredible hope to work - I want to deploy the Hope that there is coming a day when believers from every corner of the earth and from every period of time will be gathered before the Throne of God - a day when *'things of earth will grow strangely dim'* in the light of our God's Glory and Grace.

It will be a day with *'Salvation from sin and death'* will be on everyone's lips and a Focus upon the Source of our Salvation will blot everything else out.

All of those believers will be perfectly united in their identity with the God of all Creation: Father, Son and Spirit. They will wrap arms around each other, speaking the same language and anticipating the same destiny. They will represent the high point of God's dealing with mankind - They will be his people forever and there will be no conflict or discord among them. They will truly be a *'World-Wide Fellowship.'*

This hope of mine is ***discovered*** in the Book of Revelation even as the momentum behind it is gained from a variety of other Scriptures.

***Discover*** or ***Re-discover*** it with me this morning ...

***MY HOPE DISCOVERED ...*** (Make these personal - "My")

*"There ... was a great **MULTITUDE** that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language ... And they cried out, "**SALVATION** belongs to our **GOD** ... and to the **LAMB**."  
(Revelation 7:9-10)*

What a day that will be ... These, pictured in this passage, are just the ***Tribulation Saints*** but they, gathered all together, generate the hope of an even greater expression of fellowship that will ultimately come.

Here now is '*My Hope Defined*' ... What is it that I am expecting?

***MY HOPE DEFINED ...*** (Put it into 'expectant' form.)

There is coming a day when ***BELIEVERS*** from every corner of the earth will be ***UNITED*** as ***ONE*** before the Father's ***THRONE***.

No squabbling, no debating ... only enjoying the purity and holiness of the moment and of the Salvation that they share together!

So how do I put that ***HOPE*** to work?

How do I '*Deploy it*' in the midst of this life's current realities?

***MY HOPE DEPLOYED ...*** (Release this 'Hope' into your life)

Since my hope is in the ***UNITY*** that all believers will one day experience, I will make every ***EFFORT*** to ***UNITE*** with all ***BELIEVERS*** even ***NOW***.

An amazing thing took place in our Country just yesterday ... There was a '*Prayer March*' in Washington DC organized by Franklin Graham and others ...

Born-Again Believers (the kind that will be gathered around the Throne of God one day) gathered together to declare that the only HOPE for this nation's ills is to be found in the Goodness and Mercy of God and in the Salvation from Sin provided by Jesus Christ.

Here's a picture of their assembly on the Capitol Mall ...

Picture of the Prayer Rally

This was not promoted as a political rally ... It was a Prayer Rally. Calling people to pray for every aspect of our nation. It was a Call to rise above '*earthly things*' and to appeal for '*God's Forgiveness and Renewed Provision for this Land*.'

And it pictured for me and stimulated in me renewed hope that true believers possess the possibility even now of finding tremendous fellowship with one another.

That kind of fellowship and the joyful testimony it generates has been a desire of Christ for His Church from the very beginning.

**Today's Key Scripture** records a fervent appeal for unity from the Apostle Paul ... In this appeal, Paul tells us all we need to know about **what** Christian Unity really is and **how** it comes about.

(This works on a smaller scale as well as a churchwide, worldwide one.)

Follow along with me as I read ...

### **TODAY'S KEY SCRIPTURE ... *Philippians 2:1-2***

*If you have any **ENCOURAGEMENT** from being united with Christ, if any **COMFORT** from his love, if any **FELLOWSHIP** with the **SPIRIT**, if any **TENDERNESS** and **COMPASSION**, then make my **JOY** complete by being **LIKE-MINDED**, having the same **LOVE**, being one in **SPIRIT** and **PURPOSE**.*

In this pretty familiar passage, Paul gives us ...

### **A DESCRIPTION OF TRUE UNITY ...**

True and blessed Christian Unity is enjoyed by believers who are 'Thinking Alike' and 'Loving Alike' and 'Being Motivated Alike.'

\* **THINKING ALIKE** - Paul says: *"Be like-minded"*  
And what should we be *'Thinking'* about?

In his letter to the Colossians, Paul answered that question:

*"Set your minds on things above not on earthly things."*  
(Colossians 3:2)

\* **LOVING ALIKE** ... Paul writes: *"Having the same love"*  
And what type of love is that - what's the focus of this unifying love?

In the upper room, the last night of Jesus earthly life, Jesus answered that:

*"As I have loved you, you are to love one another."*  
(John 13:34)

Love purposefully and sacrificially and with eternity in view.

\* **BEING MOTIVATED ALIKE** ... Paul says: *"Being one in spirit and purpose"*  
And what is the thing that should motivate and inspire us?

In the very next chapter in this letter to the Philippians, Paul responds:

*"I press on toward the goal to win the prize."*  
(Philippians 3:14)

Being with people who '*Think like me*' and '*Love like me*' and who are '*Motivated by the same things as me*' is pretty much '*heaven on earth.*'

So how can it happen - What are the conditions under which true Christian Unity can be enjoyed? Paul identified ***four*** in today's passage.

***THE CONDITIONS FOR TRUE UNITY ...***

\* ***ENCOURAGEMENT IN CHRIST*** ... (If there is any) - There should be!

*"Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."*

John 16:33

\* ***COMFORT FROM CHRIST'S LOVE*** ... (If there is any) - There should be!

*"Greater love has no man than this ..."*

John 15:13

\* ***FELLOWSHIP WITH THE SPIRIT*** ... (If there is any) - There should be!

*"He (the Father) will give you another companion ..."*

John 14:16

\* ***TENDERNESS AND COMPASSION*** ... (If there is any) - There should be!

*"I have longed to gather (you) like a hen gathers her chicks."*

Luke 13:34

***Final Thot ...***

In a common ***CHRISTIAN CONFESSION***,  
***EARTHLY DISTINCTIONS*** disappear!